
IOWA UTILITIES BOARD Energy Section

Docket No.: NOI-2008-0003
Utility: Multiple
Memo Date: October 14, 2013

TO: The Board

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SUBJECT: Smart Grid Deployment – Needs Board Order Requiring Update From Inquiry Participants (Draft Board Order is attached)

I. Background

Docket No. NOI-2008-0003 was initiated in response to the requirements of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (EISA). On March 9, 2010, the Board issued an order that expanded the inquiry to include smart grid deployment in Iowa. Since the inquiry was opened, two workshops have been held and written comments solicited from inquiry participants on various smart grid issues.

II. Staff Analysis

On June 25, 2012, the Board issued an order that discussed a staff memorandum that, among other things, contained an overview of activities and technological advances on various smart grid projects Iowa utilities were undertaking. The Board order also stated that inquiry participants will be notified if the Board solicits additional information.

Staff believes that an update of utilities' current smart grid activities and issues related to smart grid technology deployment will be helpful so that all participants and the Board have a common knowledge base to determine whether additional smart grid initiatives would provide value to utility customers. In the last round of comments that were filed with the Board, a common theme was the importance of focusing on the balance between customer value and cost.

Staff recommends that inquiry participants be required to file comments with current smart grid information; any reply comments may be filed. The information request is open-ended and participants are encouraged to address smart grid issues that have arisen since the last time comments were filed in 2012. However, there are some topics that the Board may consider requesting investor-owned utilities and the cooperative and municipal associations to address. These are:

1. An update from Interstate Power and Light Company on its Web-based interface with industrial customers, including any customer feedback, and an update on its meter installation in Dubuque.
2. Updates from MidAmerican Energy Company on its Synchrophasor project and Opower project, including any customer feedback.
3. An update from the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives on meter replacement (Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI)) programs undertaken by various member cooperatives including the progress made in AMI and Outage Management Systems (OMS) working in-tandem.
4. An update from the Iowa Association of Municipal Utilities on grant-funded projects undertaken by some of its member utilities.

III. Staff Recommendation

Issue the attached draft order requesting general updates from the NOI participants and specific updates from investor-owned utilities and associations on the topics identified in the body of the memorandum.